

a family of  
LGBTQ  
prisoners and  
“free world”  
LGBTQA allies  
who support  
each other

## DECEMBER 2012

Dear friends,

I know that this newsletter will most likely get to you just after Christmas passes, but I wanted to take the liberty of sharing some things about this holiday anyhow. 'Tis the season for people to talk about Santa's naughty and nice list and judge those who are considered naughty, but I say it's the naughty ones we should be celebrating this time of year. The word itself has its history dated back to the 16th century, according to the dictionary of etymology. It was a word to describe those who were wicked or evil and morally wrong. In particular, “a woman of bad character... might be called a naughty pack.” Today the word naughty also has sexual connotation, and if that's not your first connection with the word then I suggest you find a magazine with “naughty angels” in it, you'll see what I'm talking about. Naughty also refers to those who simply misbehave, those who disobey the social norms or expectations set upon them. The word “naughty” has an essentially paternalistic meaning and is primarily imposed upon children, but I like to think of the word naughty in its expansiveness, those who disobey the social order, those the dominant power structure would call wicked and of bad character.

The history of celebrating Christmas in the United States is, without question, a history of oppressed people and the system's attempt to co-opt and suppress resistance. In 1600s Europe a tradition of misrule was acceptable in the Christmas season, bands of merry making workers would go to the home of the wealthy owning class and perform songs, the beginning of Christmas caroling, and in exchange they would receive treats and wine. This act was in no way a subversion of capitalism, in some ways it is similar to how modern workers play expect and perform for Christmas bonuses. It was a tradition that came with colonizers to the United States. The tradition experienced challenges due to the Puritan criminalization of Christmas celebration, but the reveling continued in a similar way until the early 1800s when things began to change. At this point the wealthy were no longer willing to gracefully participate in this misrule. The working people were also no longer willing to only wait for snacks of cakes and wine. The bands of young men, mostly, began demanding money and greater presents before they were willing to leave the homes. They were waiting for their cut of the wealth that they created with their labor that the owning class simply put into their pockets for their own use. The good times of Christmas became an opportunity for the white working class to make demands of the rich.

Christmas was also an opportune time for Africans held in slavery to rebel or escape, especially those in the South after the Congress of the Confederation in 1787. The strategies of resistance for those held in slavery differed based on where people were located, the size of the plantation, and the capacity to mobilize with others. It was common practice for plantation owners and others who held slaves to permit travel between plantations for slaves to be with family and loved ones. This was the perfect moment for families to gather together and escape to the North under the cover of Christmas. (The picture in the corner is of slaves celebrating Christmas in 1857).

Other slaves used the Christmas celebrating of their masters to plan rebellions and uprisings. There are two most famous Christmas time slave uprisings, the first was in Jamaica in 1831-1832. During this uprising nearly 60,000 slaves in Jamaica rose up in what was also called the Baptist War, named after the lead orchestrator of the uprising, Baptist preacher, Samuel Sharpe. The uprising led to the destruction of numerous plantations that benefited off the labor of slavery. Unfortunately the rebellion was quashed, and hundreds of slaves executed. However, it gave the needed strength to an already growing abolitionist movement to get more active and abolished slavery in 1837, decades before chattel slavery ended in the United States. Christmas means a time for fighting back!

With this holiday season closing please know that you are cared for and not forgotten and that this is a season of resistance! We had many holiday card parties around the country and tried to get mail to as many folks as possible. Know that we keep the work going because indeed once there were no prisons, that day will come again.

In loving solidarity, Jason

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Addresses

Dear Black & Pink Family,

This is my first time writing to you all. First off, I want to say how excited I am to have found you, I enjoy all the comments others have to say. It is really encouraging to know that I am not in this battle alone. Others have rejected me (family & friends) because of my lifestyle. I am a 30 year old transgender person. My chosen name is Tori . The prison that I am at only identifies me by my male name. It hurts they do so, but I guess I will get used to it. Right now I am currently in the process of getting help with my GID (Gender Identity Disorder). I am working with Lambda Legal to do so. Great people, they are. The process is moving slow but hopefully one day it will all pay off. Coming out was not an easy task. I knew that my parents were not going to be happy because of my decision, but I had to tell them because it would relieve me to do so. They have nothing to do with me now because of it. I thought I was alone in a big world without family and friends. I was given the Black & Pink address by a prison friend and told that you were an encouragement to him. I am so glad he gave it to me because every Newsletter I receive is so encouraging. I can't wait to receive them each month. I was so relieved to know that I am not in this battle alone.

Once again, thanks for everything you all say and stand for. Keep the letters of encouragement coming. You all are the best thing to happen to me.

Much Love to all Bro and Sis,  
Tori, SC



Hello,

My name is Miranda and I am new to the Black & Pink family. I am excited about being a part of the family. I enjoyed the Newsletter. It's not easy being in prison but God will help one through. I have been bisexual since I was 12 years old and I love women. I have been in prison for 6 years. I am 24 years old now. I want all ya'll to know that it doesn't matter what people think about ya'll because you are who you are no matter what. Who even cares about what people think. Nobody is perfect! We are all going to be who we want to be regardless. There is a purpose for everything that happens in our life. I want everybody to know that I love ya'll and ya'll are in my prayers. Keep ya'll's head up. May God Bless ya'll and ya'll's family!

-Miranda, Tennessee



Dear Black & Pink,

I have received your Newsletters for a while, and I have enjoyed reading. What I have to say is, it is nice to hear the stories about people and their struggles they have.

In Iowa it is all not that great, for you do very little to get around. Out of town in a country setting all you see is corn, beans, or cows and that is life here. Not much, like I said.

I hope all is good with people that read Black & Pink.

Sincerely,  
Tyler T., Iowa



Dear Black & Pink,

I'm so happy to be in touch with you all. I have no friends and family myself. I've lived as a "straight" even though I've had gay experiences in the past 20 years. I have not "come out" or made a circle of gay friends which I'm sure I'd be more comfortable with. And seeing how I'm in this homophobic prison in the South, I still must remain in the closet, at least until I get out. I'm currently on a faith based unit trying to better myself, but I can't even really be myself because the program's religious ideals frown on homosexuality so I remain in the closet, smiling on the outside but frowning on the inside. I'm not really happy and have no friends to care, relate to, or express myself with. But I will persevere and in November 2013 be released to an area where I know they have a large gay community where I can meet and make new friends from the lifestyle I prefer. And of course, I now have my family there at Black & Pink. Thanks ya'll and amen to so many stories I have read in the Newsletter, I know what you all are going through.

You are in my prayers.

Love and Respect,  
Michael, Texas

Hi B&P,

My name is Timothy, my reason for writing this letter is 'cause someone let me read your Newsletter and I was very touched by the letters in there (September 2012 Newsletter). See, I'm a 21 year old gay male, incarcerated in California. This is where I came out and I am myself, very happy. I messed around on the streets but never got deep. I was the guy everyone wanted to hang with, the girls loved me, but that is over with 'cause since I've been down, all I want is to be with a guy, I'm just a gay boy. I'm really trying to say, is that you guys are good people and that helps people like me get by. I deal with all kind of talk about gays, me being gay but really it never got to me 'cause I'm happy with me. Also, I just see myself falling deeply in love with a man, not a woman. I was with a girl and she left me after I got my 4 years in prison.

What made me come out was a guy that had a crush on me, he asked me this, "Are you happy with yourself?" He knew I was gay, I don't know how. He was gay and you can see he was out the closet. Well, when he asked me that I said, "What do you mean?" He said, "Look, you'll never be happy if you're not true to yourself. So when you can answer that, get back to me." Well, two months go by and one day I went up to him and said, "Josh, I'm gay and happy and thank you." He said, "You're family." He moved in and we became lovers for 8 months and he went home and forgot all about me. I can understand that. Well, my point is that it does not matter what people say or think about you, and if you can, come out and you will see you can be happy and you will find love easier. Your view on things will be clearer and our family will grow.

I'm 21 years old and have been in jail since I was 18 for a fight. I'm one that can say I went from school to prison. Two days after I got my high school diploma I went to a party and that's where I got my prison sentence for a fight, all 'cause someone called my ex a bitch. I just want to say it straight up- if you don't stay in class, you're going to struggle more. In this world, no one will help you the way you can help yourself.

Always,  
Timothy, California

Dear Black and Pink Family,

It is so great that Michelle Kosilek is winning her fight to receive proper medical treatment for her gender identity disorder.

Here in Texas there is another very important medical treatment being denied to offenders. We sex offenders are being warehoused, then set free with inadequate, ineffective treatment for our mental illness. Sometimes we are required to serve 15, 20, even 30 years before we are considered for parole, and we just do our time without treatment. Texas tags on a year and a half of Sex Offender Treatment to the end of your sentence, but what about the dozen or more years just wasted? When we ask the medical department about appropriate treatment for our illness, we are told there is no money in the budget for therapy or treatment for sex offenders. Really? Shouldn't the public be screaming to its representatives to provide money for this much needed medical service? I don't want to offend again, no sex offender really wants to offend, to come back to prison. But, the lack of interest in treatment of sex offenders means society is partly responsible for creating situations where offenders are more likely to reoffend. Without proper, adequate psychological treatment for sex offenders, wouldn't the person who offended be expected to be the same getting out of prison as when he or she went into prison? We need long term treatment while we are in prison to re-condition our thinking process. Sex offenders are often unable to correct their errors on their own, or they would never have offended in the first place and definitely wouldn't offend a second time. The desires we have can have a "snowball down the mountain" effect that rolls out of control, getting bigger and bigger, difficult to stop without help.

The public needs to be aware of the lack of treatment in prisons for sex offenders if they want a safer world. The 18 month program the Texas prisons offer isn't enough and isn't appropriate. We know that because so many who attend, re-offend and are re-arrested. Can we sex offenders count on you for help? Disregarding this cry for treatment will not make the world any safer. It's your call.

Alone and abandoned,  
Joseph, Texas



# Civil Tone... From a Woman of Color's Perspective: Part II



Dear Men, Women, Boys and Girls,  
My family of life and struggle this is for you...

My name be Ms. Lakesha N. and I am a woman who is transsgendered, incarcerated, 28 and working for Justice and Equality for the whole of us.

I am currently housed in an Indiana Department of Corrections Control Unit. On my perspective for change....

If we really want the change we seek, we the citizens of our Constitution, our United States, shall take it to court all at once and enforce our rights. No matter how much opposition we incur.

If you are told by anyone that you can't sue a Judge, the state courts, the President, or the United States Courts for disregarding any of your rights, politely tell them they are misinformed and direct them to the wordings and mandates of clause I of our U.S. 14th Amendment and 42 U.S.C. § 1983 (2000), and there you build on collective perspective...together.

Apply these perspectives to all you do by paying attention to how things are worded, what's mandatory, what's not mandatory, and keeping in mind that even as a prisoner, you are a citizen of the United States and your particular state, and as long as you are a citizen, the mandated safeguards of our Constitution (Federal) which overshadows all state constitutions apply to we prisoners, Ok?

Let's bring this down a bit. Men, women, and children that are transgendered and incarcerated, as you have been told before, file your grievances. Send your medical and mental health care requests for diagnosis of your transsexualism. Keep copies of everything, grievance numbers, dates, health care form numbers, dates, its contained issues, names of people such requests were sent by or to, and if you don't get a response from your initial grievances on the above policy being honored, don't trip- you did all you were to do and have met the Exhaustion Requirements of the PLRA. The Prison Litigation Reform Act (7th Cir. 2002) says "When prison officials do not respond to a prisoner's initial grievance, administrative remedies are exhausted." When you receive any discriminative reply, put on the documents the dates you received such responses... this is actually the case for all things you receive- document their received dates on the document and your file logs, Ok?

**Perspective:** No matter what responses you're given, how you're treated, Keep on filing your paperwork and paying attention to the words of everything. Keep focused on our positive fight and never lose sight of our fight's foundation: equality, love, life, and liberty. Even when you cry, asking yourself "why me?", know that you're not alone! Look in a mirror and you'll see that when you cry we are all crying, when you lose we all lose. When you smile we all smile, and surely when you fight, We All Fight!

Now I have a couple cases pending about Transgender treatment modalities and the International Policy for Imprisoned Transgendered and the case number is: 3 11 CV 00282 RLM CAN, and a case against the U.S. President, United States, State of Indiana and their representatives for violating my rights in my criminal case. At a later time we will get into that. I am fighting for our betterment as I have been for some while now. I've been in prison 9 full years on the 11th of September 2012, the start of my 10th year. I am however on my way out and I've much planned for our family...Later elaborations, I promise!

Another word you need to know the definition of is Injury, which is legally defined as "any wrong or damage done to another, either in his/her person; rights; reputation; or property." Unlike the ordinary meaning of injury (that which damages the body), a legal injury is damage resulting from a violation of a legal right, and which the law will recognize as deserving of redress. See 33 A.1.2.

Also, Mental Anguish- "Compensable injury embracing all forms of mental pain, as opposed to mere physical pain, including grief, distress, anxiety, and fright.

**Perspective:** If you are harassed (mentally, verbally, emotionally, physically) by state/U.S. Representatives because of your sex and gender, discriminated against, or denied medical and mental health care you are entitled to, certainly that is mentally hard, emotionally hard, etc. So file a grievance on being subjected to mental anguish because of the deprivations of your constitutional rights. The same goes for discrimination, harassment, so forth and so on. Ok? You, by doing this, are building your case against your oppressors. Everything can be connected. It's one big story that you have the power to control.

The International Policy for Imprisoned Transgendered needs to be enforced by us all! The policy says even if we are not on legal hormones or hormones at all we "shall be" allowed to start such while incarcerated and if such policy mandates are denied to us, SUE and the law says we won't lose!

In the case of Andrea Fields et al vs. Judy P Smith et al, 653 F. 3rd 550 (C.A.7. (wis.)) 2011, held for Andrea and other therein plaintiffs that were Wisconsin T.S. Females were entitled to "effective treatment" for GID, *Continued...*

*Continued from previous page...*a serious medical and mental health condition and refusing to provide such "effective treatment for a serious medical condition serves no valid penological purpose and amounts to torture".

The operations of prisons nationwide are changing with regards to our medical and mental health care in prisons. We have to continue to enforce our basic Constitutional rights and make our government (courts, prisons) honor our rights like they get paid to do. For example, Indiana has a policy called "Information and Standards of Conduct for Departmental Staff" Policy #04-03-103 mandates in Section 4.E. That all IDOC Staff "shall uphold the provisions of the United States Constitution, the Constitution of the State of Indiana, federal and State laws, rules and regulations and the Policies of the Department."

By such policy, Indiana Department of Corrections are mandated to honor and uphold the Federal International Policy for we Imprisoned Transgendered. Check and see if your state Department of Corrections have similar policy mandates which is fire for our fight for our rights! All Department of Corrections facilities are mandated to uphold the laws and not violate prisoners' rights, but if you find the rule of policy that says this, that strengthens your case.

**Perspective:** It's all well for us to Picket, peacefully assemble, but that's only letting people know we have an issue, or issues. It's time to come together and take all of our issues to the courts, together! Together we will win. Even those not incarcerated can file civil suits on these issues because we prisoners being denied our rights of many deprives our non-incarcerated allies their rights to peace, happiness, and to be free from mental anguish...Are ya'll still with ya girl? Hope so!

Just because we are incarcerated does not mean we are not citizens and that we don't have equal protection of all laws. As the 14th U.S. Constitutional Amendment Clause I says, it applies to all citizens, therein giving no distinctions between the citizens that this Federal law says it's applicable to. Nor does it imply that the law's mandates do not apply to citizens that are incarcerated. Even though we are imprisoned, we are still citizens to which that Federal law applies- its in the wording of the law itself- No Matter What Anyone Says!

**Perspective:** The LGBTQ communities in prison and out make up a nice percentage of votes and other national, local, and international support, which means we have twice as much control on what's passed in our laws, what's enforced, what's shot down, so forth. If we all file lawsuits on the same issues tackling them at the same time, what a legal movement!

**Perspective:** The same unjust "laws" being thrust upon we prisoners are the same laws that apply to those of us not incarcerated.

**Perspective:** SUE! SUE! SUE! Everyone that violates our rights! Until they stop!

**Perspective:** I love you all and you will hear from me futurely.

Love Forevermore,  
Angel Baby

Editor's Notes: It is great we can share so much legal knowledge with each other. Please note that the free world B&P crew does not "fact check" or verify any of this information. We simply make it so people can share knowledge with each other. And as Lakesha mentions, being a citizen does give one more rights and power to demand to be treated fairly, and it's also true that everyone should be able to present themselves in their chosen gender, whether citizen or not.

## I know I can

This world is no joke, living life trying not to choke  
No money in your pocket is what we people call broke  
I rather be broke than broken, holding on by a tiny thread  
Ducking and dodging the bullets that's constantly being shot at my head  
Foes come upon me, to rob me of my pride

***But they can never take it from me, for I hold it deep inside.***

No weapon formed to hurt me, can ever break me down  
No matter how hard they try, I just mute away the sound  
A famous rapper once said For every dark night, there's a brighter day  
So for every tear drop, God will wipe away  
So with my faith, I take my place and stand

***With no self-defeating belief, because I know I can.***

Dedicated to my Black & Pink family  
Ms. Zariahé, Nevada



# Cruel & Unusual

New York State Department of Corrections has an unfair disciplinary system. A system that is reactionary and it has become desensitized to the serious repercussions of prolonged solitary confinement. The practice of handing out massive amounts of Solitary Confinement has a direct effect on the deterioration of inmates' mental health as well as recidivism.

In the early 1980's New York State prison population was 33,000 with 32 adult prisons. The average amount of Solitary Confinement given was 30 days up to 6 months for more serious misbehavior. Fast forward 18 years later there was approximately 70,000 prisoners and 70 prisons. Solitary Confinement time increased from 2 months on average to 5 months, and 6.7 % of the prison population was held in Solitary Confinement.

Today the prison population has decreased to 55,000 but Solitary Confinement has continued to increase to 18 months to 2 years as a common minimum. Approximately 4,180 inmates, 7.8 % of the prison population are currently being held in Solitary Confinement.

As an inmate that has been in Solitary Confinement for 2 and a half years, I know first hand the psychological and mental health problems caused by massive amounts of box time- Depression, Schizophrenia, Anti-social Personality Disorder, and other serious mental disorders.

When I first arrived at Southport Correctional facility (a prison that holds solitary confinement inmates only), I was introduced to the most horrible conditions in my life. The only way I can describe it is as a physical manifestation of hell. I became very anti-social because if you say the wrong things you may get feces thrown on you or the C.O.'s may not feed you. Then the depression hit me hard along with other mental health problems, I no longer felt the desire to live. After a year of trying to get help, I met a good person that got me into a program. So now I'm getting help for my mental health problems.

Prisoner's Legal Services of New York and disability advocates filed a lawsuit against DOC of New York on this issue and they won (settled out). The court mandated that all inmates with serious mental health disorders (Axis I and Axis II Diagnoses from the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders, a handbook categorizing mental disorders) be placed in "special programs" called Residential Mental Health Units (RMHU) and Behavioral Health Units (BHU). The problem with this is that these programs combined only hold approximately 270 cells. There are numerous inmates with mental health problems in facilities that have been built solely to house prisoners in Solitary Confinement and these men are clearly a danger to themselves as well as others, but they're not getting help because these human warehouses are understaffed to the point that it holds about 10 mental health staff with no mental health doctor on hand.

So where do these inmates end up? Some of the lucky ones get one of these 270 beds in a program. But the majority end up back on the streets and may struggle with homelessness and drugs and for the most part end up back in jail. This is how we deal with mental health inmates in New York State prison system. Is this some kind of sick form of job security? I have to ask, how is it that in the best country in the world and in a progressive, liberal state, that this is the only method to maintain order in the prison system? **There has to be a better way than putting someone in a human box for 23 hours a day for a year in Solitary Confinement** for a positive drug test or up to 24 months for gang material. New York State has yet to come up with a proactive, cost effective way to deter inmates from going to Solitary Confinement. I ask another question- is it in the best interest of D.O.C.'s to take a proactive approach to helping prisoners become successful when released? Let's take a look at the U.S. Constitution.

The 8th Amendment speaks out against cruel and unusual punishment. But now we have to ask, is mental torment in violation of the Amendment? When the time comes that will be up to the courts to decide. There is another part that will have major influence on the above decision and it is the 13th Amendment, Section 1 states "Neither slavery nor involuntary servitude, except as a punishment for crime whereof the party shall have been duly convicted, shall exist within the United States, or any place subject to their jurisdiction." The 13th Amendment limits the rights of prisoners there for giving the state government control over an inmate. Which makes room for systematic abuse and corruption. All civilized nations must have a form of justice system. But when the scales of Lady Justice have become unbalanced with this abuse and corruption, then we as a people have to ask- what are we using our justice system for?

-Mr. Williams, New York





# Stonewall

Have you ever seen a stone wall bleed  
 mortar cry out, or a brick sweat?  
 There are names carved  
 in this Stonewall  
 Not like 80's graffiti  
 in New York City subways  
 But, there, like falling soldiers  
 There, the names are all over  
 Each name tells the same story  
 from different points of view  
 which depends on where they stood  
 With a stance as glue  
 The Gospel to His Resurrection  
 These names to ours  
 that Stonewall is bleeding  
 it's blood our power

-Tyron aka Motif, Pennsylvania



# Freedom

Do you know what it is like to be caged like an animal?  
 In a box with is unfit to be healthy for human growth?  
 For deep inside the bowels of cell block 4B are men-  
 Who breath like me, hurt like me,  
 Cry like me, and are yearning to be free – like me.

Clink, clink.

Shuffle, shuffle.

As I sit in Department 3C, I secretly rejoice in  
 (and thank God for) my paid-freedom.

Between you and me, the view on this side of  
 liberty's aisle is much better to behold.

For also sitting in the courtroom, in another cage  
 Structured solely to contain humans, are men-  
 Who hope like me, believe like me,  
 pray like me, and are wishing to be free – like me.

Clang, clang.

Shuffle, shuffle.

For this is the true reality of our criminal justice system:

To be set free you must first possess money

Yes, brothers and sisters:

Money = Freedom = \$\$\$ = Free!

And as he, who looks just like me, meets me eyes briefly,  
 Turns and walks away, leaves me with one final sound

Clink, clang – his iron chains.

Shuffle, shuffle – his tired feet.

Tony R., Incarcerated in California  
 ¡Si se puede!

# Question!?

What man is worth my life as a sacrifice?  
 Worth my cries and dreams of the night?  
 Can take my screams of pain and make everything  
 alright?

Can see my beliefs and encourage me to reach higher  
 than the Sky?

Make his ways my positive light?

A guidance I crave, even out of sight, and still will be  
 stuck deep within my mind?

Someone I could see even if I was blind?  
 Making my attention upon him worth my time?  
 So fine, divine is his kind?

That's the type of man I would die to make mine  
 Yes only the best is what I wish to wine and dine  
 The type that my curiosity would love to find!  
 "And" so I seek to perfect lines for my perfect rhymes...  
 "Are you the answer to my question?"

-Shaylanna, NY



# Living with HIV in an Alabama Prison

World Aids Day, December 1, 2012 from ACLU.org by Albert Knox



## Science, not Prejudice:

### End Discrimination Against Prisoners with HIV

In 2011, the ACLU and the ACLU of Alabama sued the Alabama Department of Corrections for discrimination against inmates living with HIV. Alabama is one of only two states, along with South Carolina, that continue to segregate inmates living with HIV in separate housing units and otherwise restrict their access to prison programs. We are awaiting a decision. You can read more about it [here](#).

I found out that I was HIV-positive while I was in prison in Alabama, and right away they locked me up in segregation until they could send me off to Limestone Correctional Facility where the other prisoners with

HIV were kept. I hadn't even done anything to get disciplinary action, and yet they locked me up in solitary right away. When I was let out of my cell, the guards would always say "dead man walking" loud enough for the other prisoners to hear. That's when I realized this was going to be a weird, weird time.

Soon they sent me to Limestone to live in the HIV-positive unit. Alabama and South Carolina are the only two states where they still segregate positive inmates – all the other states stopped doing it when they realized it was unnecessary. While I was at Limestone I joined their Substance Abuse Program (SAP). It's an excellent program and it helped me get myself together and get off drugs. When you attend SAP, you go to one part of the facility to attend the classes, and during that time HIV-positive prisoners and prisoners without HIV are together in one place. But then when it's lunchtime, they send the prisoners with HIV back to the other side of the facility to eat lunch separate from everyone else. Most of the prisoners in SAP live and eat together – it's just the prisoners with HIV who are separated at lunchtime and after classes.

One day I was at SAP when they called for lunch. One of the inmates without HIV invited me to eat with him and some of the other prisoners. I felt honored that they invited me, so I just lined up, sat down for 15 minutes to eat with them, and then went back to class. It felt really good just to feel like a regular inmate during those 15 minutes.

That afternoon an officer approached me and said she heard I had eaten lunch with the non-positive prisoners. I said that was true, and the next thing I knew they put me in solitary confinement and locked down the whole facility. It turned out they were trying to find my particular spoon and plate. I'm not sure why, since you can't transmit HIV this way.

They gave me a disciplinary ticket for being in an unauthorized area and causing a health hazard. I was in solitary confinement – which we call seg – for several weeks. I can't remember exactly how long because it's impossible to keep track of the time while you're in there, but it was close to a month. The officers in seg were very sympathetic toward me, because they said they didn't think I had done anything wrong.

When you're in the segregated housing for prisoners with HIV, you don't get the opportunity to participate in the full range of special training and work programs that the Department of Corrections offers. I would have liked to be able to study cooking – I really like to cook and I would have been really good at that. I would have loved to be able to work so I could have saved some money to help me land on my feet when I got out of prison. Instead, I couldn't make any money. The prison loses out too, since they get part of the pay when prisoners are allowed to work.

Prisoners with HIV also don't get the opportunity to transfer to a facility closer to their family, like other prisoners. That's too bad – being able to work and to see your family really help to make the transition back to regular society easier. If prisoners with HIV could do these things, they might have a more successful re-entry into the real world when they get out.

Prisoners in the segregated HIV housing are made to wear a white armband, and prison officials tell everyone what that means. You can spot it from a mile away. People judge you instantly. I would have liked to be able to tell people on my own terms, but I didn't have a chance.

I joined the ACLU lawsuit because I feel like it's not right for us to be punished just because we have a disease. I'm not asking for special treatment – all I want is to be treated the same as other inmates. I believe that you do the crime, you do the time – but you should have the chance to better yourself while you're doing the time.

There is no reason whatsoever for HIV-positive prisoners to be segregated, but unfortunately prison officials in Alabama are not educated in the ways of transmitting the disease. Hopefully, the court will rule against this ongoing discrimination, and Alabama will have to do the right thing. If something isn't working, you have to change it. You have to change with the times.





Noam Chomsky and Angela Davis discussing the Prison Industrial Complex, Palestine, Education, etc.

DECEMBER 8, 2012 ~ 7PM (DOORS AT 6)  
BERKLEE PERFORMANCE CENTER, 136 MASSACHUSETTS AVE., BOSTON

**CRITICAL RESISTANCE**  
with  
THE CITY SCHOOL & BLACK AND PINK  
present  
for the first time ever in conversation  
**ANGELA Y. DAVIS & NOAM CHOMSKY**  
MODERATED BY VIJAY PRASAD

**RADICAL FUTURES  
AND PROSPECTS FOR FREEDOM**  
co-sponsored by Alternatives for Community and Environment, Beantown Society,  
Boston area Youth Organizing Project, Project HIP-HOP, Reflect & Strengthen

Tickets: [www.berklee.edu/BPC](http://www.berklee.edu/BPC) ~ More info: 510.444.0454 ~ [lovenotjails@gmail.com](mailto:lovenotjails@gmail.com) ~ #lovenotjails



Project Hip-Hop youth perform about prisons



Questions are asked to the panelists while Jason looks on



Rodine from Foundation Movement

On Saturday December 8, Black & Pink co-hosted the first-ever conversation between Angela Davis & Noam Chomsky with The City School (where we have donated office space) and Critical Resistance, Davis' prison abolitionist organization. The sold out Berklee Performance Center was filled with 1,200 enthusiastic audience members, and 400 people watched from home on the internet. Here are some comments people "tweeted" on the website [twitter.com](https://twitter.com) during the event:

**ShaniceMaxwell:** "A lot of times we don't talk about the youth or their accomplishments but they really are the future leaders"

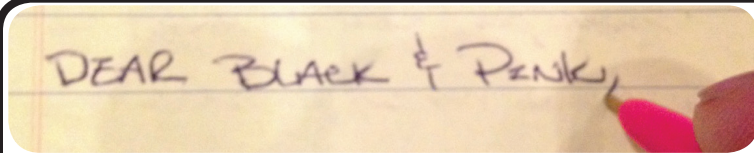
**ProjectHIPHOP:** "If the economic organizing of the 70s had continued, the minimum wage would be \$25 today. #NoamChomsky"

**The\_City\_School:** "Davis: we think of violence as male but the most consistent victims of violence across the world are women"

**mbotastic:** "we must expand our prison abolition to open air prisons. Free Palestine. An open air prison." -Angela Davis

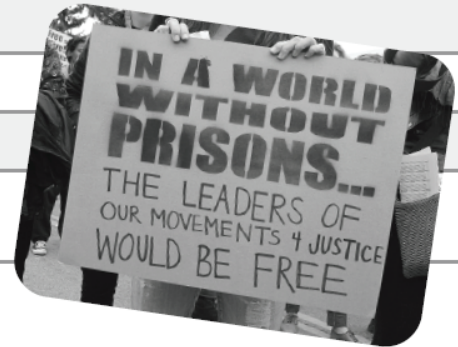
**la femme agresiva:** If we want to abolish prisons, we have to RADICALLY transform our schools." - Angela Davis

**BoricuaFeminist:** Egalitarian intergenerational movement- suggested by Angela Davis



Community Church of Boston  
c/o Black & Pink - topic tag  
565 Boylston St  
Boston, MA 02116

If you would like to request:	Please use this topic tag, and we'll do our best:
<b>Newsletter Subscriptions</b> (Start or Stop)	<b>Newsletter Subscriptions</b>
<b>Newsletter Submissions</b> (Poems & Stories)	<b>Newsletter Submissions</b>
<b>"Outside" Free Pen-Pal Ad form request</b>	<b>Pen-Pal</b>
<b>Address Change</b> (Will take time to update; at this time, we are mostly unable to send back issues.)	<b>Address Change</b>
<b>Black &amp; Pink Organization Feedback</b>	<b>Developing Leadership</b>
<b>Request Erotica</b>	<b>Erotica</b>
<b>Religious Support</b>	<b>Religion</b>
<b>Volunteering</b> (Send thank you cards to donors, etc.)	<b>Volunteer</b>
<b>Advocacy Requests</b> (include details about situation and thoughts about how calls or letters might help)	<b>Advocacy</b>
<b>Art</b> Reed apologizes that the art project is currently not accepting new artwork until we have a volunteer base.	—



**LEGAL:** Consider writing to Lambda Legal for support or referrals with legal issues that you are having. "Lambda Legal is a national organization committed to achieving full recognition of the civil rights of lesbians, gay men, bisexuals, transgender people and those with HIV through impact litigation, education and public policy work." **Lambda Legal, National Office 120 Wall Street, Suite 1500, New York, NY 10005, 212-809-8585**

Another resource to turn to, if you can afford the subscription (\$24 yearly, payable with new stamps), is Prison Legal News. This resource was co-started by a former gay prisoner and Men Against Sexism organizer, Ed Mead, though now it is run by Paul Wright. You can reach them by writing to:  
**Prison Legal News, P.O. Box 2420, West Brattleboro, VT 05303**

**SURVIVORS:** Just Detention International provides support for prisoners who are survivors of sexual abuse. Write them at the legal address below for a packet. Each packet includes an introductory letter, a list of local resources, fact sheets, publications about recovery from sexual abuse, and a letter of hope from another survivor.  
**Ms. Chris Daley, Esq., 3325 Wilshire Blvd., Suite 340, Los Angeles, CA 90010**

## Share with the Black & Pink Newsletter



We welcome submissions of stories, articles, poems, and some art for the B&P Newsletter. We focus on submissions that deal with being LGBTQ, being in prison, and resistance, survival, and activism. We highlight the voices of oppressed groups, including people of color, people with low income, women, people with disabilities, people living with HIV/AIDS, and others. We also focus on pieces that strengthen the Family, and further the values and goals of B&P, as we are unable to publish everything we receive. For length, we like a typed page or less (about 500 words), though we can sometimes publish pieces in two sections. We try to make at least half of the Newsletter written by people in prison. We cannot pay for submissions, though we do not charge for sending the Newsletter to people. We unfortunately have to avoid "promoting inmate to inmate communication" because it gets the newsletter banned from some prisons. For this reason, we only put people's first names and State after their submission. Also, when responding to the writing of other people, please direct your thoughts and feelings to the whole family, rather than to individuals.

Keep your writing coming!! You make this Newsletter happen.